

 <p>County of San Diego <b>EMS</b> A Division of San Diego County Fire</p>	TRIAGE TO ALTERNATE DESTINATION	<b>TAD-1005</b>
	<b>APPROVAL AND REVIEW OF TRIAGE TO ALTERNATE DESTINATION PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES</b>	
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**I. PURPOSE**

To outline the approval and review process of triage to alternate destination programs and facilities.

**II. AUTHORITY:** Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797.107, 1798.164, 1798.165, 1830, and 1831. California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 5, Sections 100181, 100182, 100183, 100184, and 100191.

**III. DEFINITION(S)**

**Triage Paramedic:** A licensed paramedic who has:

1. completed the curriculum for triage paramedic services,
2. received certification in one or more of the triage paramedic program specialties described in Section 1815 of the HSC, and
3. been accredited to provide community paramedic services by CoSD EMS as a part of an approved community paramedic program.

**Triage to Alternate Destination Program:** A program developed by CoSD EMS and approved by EMSA to provide triage paramedic assessments, while adhering to policies and protocols developed by CoSD EMS and approved by EMSA in one or more specialties, including:

1. Providing care and comfort services to hospice patients in their homes and providing for the patient's and the family's immediate care needs (including grief support) in collaboration with the patient's hospice agency until the hospice nurse arrives to assume care of the patient.
2. Providing patients with triage assessments performed by a triage paramedic and arranging subsequent transportation to an authorized alternate destination facility, as defined in HSC Section 1811.
3. Providing transport services for patients who identify as veterans and desire to be transported to a local Veterans Administration emergency department for treatment, when appropriate.

**Triage To Alternate Destination Provider:** An advanced life support provider authorized by CoSD EMS to provide triage paramedic assessments as part of an approved triage to alternate destination program specialty, as described in HSC Section 1819.

#### IV. POLICY

- A. County of San Diego Emergency Medical Services (CoSD EMS) shall approve, annually review, and facilitate any necessary agreements with one or more triage to alternate destination providers for the delivery of triage services within the CoSD EMS's jurisdiction every two (2) years. Additionally, CoSD EMS shall review, facilitate, and approve agreements with providers that partner with private entities to deliver those program specialties every two (2) years to ensure continuity and efficient transfer of care.
- B. CoSD EMS prohibits triage and assessment protocols or a triage paramedic's decision to authorize transport to an alternate destination facility from being based on, or affected by, a patient's ethnicity, citizenship, age, preexisting medical condition, insurance status, economic status, ability to pay for medical services, or any other characteristic listed or defined in subdivision (b) or (e) of Section 51 of the Civil Code, except to the extent that a circumstance such as age, sex, preexisting medical condition, or physical or mental disability is medically significant to the provision of appropriate medical care to the patient.
- C. CoSD EMS may exclude an existing advanced life support (ALS) provider from the plan if it determines that the provider's participation will negatively impact patient care. If CoSD EMS elects to exclude an ALS provider, the EMS agency shall do both of the following:
  - a. Report to the Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) the specific reasons for excluding an ALS provider during the submission of the application for approval.
  - b. Inform the ALS provider of the reasons for exclusion.
- D. EMSA retains the authority to take any necessary action against a triage to alternate destination provider for failure to meet the requirements at the state or local levels. Such action may be taken in addition to any actions taken by CoSD EMS and may include immediate suspension or revocation.
- E. CoSD EMS shall ensure that facilities participating in the triage to alternate destination program shall accommodate privately or commercially insured, Medi-Cal, Medicare, and uninsured patients.
- F. **Triage to Alternate Destination Program Approval Process**
  - 1. CoSD EMS may assist applying agencies with the following materials that are part of the written request to EMSA for the approval of an alternate destination program:
    - a. Identification of the community needs and recommended solutions.
    - b. All program medical protocols and policies not limited to data collection, transport, patient safety, and quality assurance/improvement processes.

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- c. All program service provider approval documentation, including written agreements, if any.
- d. All relevant alternate destination facility site approval documentation, including agreements.
- e. Curriculum for program-focused training.
2. EMSA shall review all proposed triage to alternate destination programs. EMSA may impose conditions as part of the approval of programs that CoSD EMS must incorporate to achieve consistency with EMSA's regulations.
3. Approval of triage to alternate destination program shall be for twelve (12) months from the date of approval. Renewal of the program shall be completed annually in cooperation with CoSD EMS.
4. Providers must maintain their designation as ALS service providers as outlined in policy P-801: Designation of Providers of Advanced Life Support Service.

**G. Triage to Alternate Destination Program Review**

1. CoSD EMS shall annually conduct a review of triage to alternate destination agencies and facility providers programs to ensure compliance with all requirements.
2. An agency's or facility's failure to comply with the provisions of this division may result in denial, probation, suspension, or revocation of approval by CoSD EMS or EMSA.
3. The procedure for notifying an agency's or facility's noncompliance shall be as follows:
  - a. Within ten (10) days of finding noncompliance, CoSD EMS shall provide a written notification to the program, including the specific requirements it failed to meet. The notification shall be sent by certified mail to the director.
  - b. Within fifteen (15) days from receipt of the notification, the agency or facility shall submit, in writing and by certified mail, to CoSD EMS one of the following:
    - 1) evidence of compliance or
    - 2) a plan to comply within sixty (60) days from the day of receipt of the notification of noncompliance.
  - c. Within fifteen (15) days from receipt of the program's response, or within thirty-five (35) days from the mailing date of the notification of noncompliance, if no response is received from the agency or facility, CoSD EMS shall issue a decision letter by certified mail to EMSA and the entity. The letter shall identify CoSD EMS's decision to take one or more of the following actions:
    - 1) Accept the evidence of compliance provided.
    - 2) Accept the plan for meeting compliance provided.
    - 3) Place the program on probation until further notice.
    - 4) Immediately suspend or revoke the program's status as a triage to alternate destination provider.
4. The decision letter shall also include, but not be limited to, the following information:
  - a. Date of CoSD EMS decision.
  - b. Specific requirements that CoSD EMS found the program failed to meet.
  - c. The probation or suspension effective and ending date, if applicable.
  - d. The terms and conditions of the probation or suspension, if applicable.
  - e. The revocation effective date, if applicable.

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5. CoSD EMS shall establish the probation, suspension, or revocation effective dates no sooner than five (5) days after the date the program has been notified.

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